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EXAMINER

STEPHENS, JUANITA DIONNE

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2853

DATE MAILED: 08/25/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Applicant No.

10/082,202

Applicant(s)

HATA ET AL.

Examiner

Juanita D. Stephens

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 12-24 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 26 February 2002 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 6
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: ____

DETAILED ACTION

Priority

1. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claims 1-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The following expression lack antecedent basis:

In claim 1, line 10 "the holding time".

In claim 2, line 3 "the holding time".

In claim 3, line 3 "the holding time".

In claim 5, lines 10-11 "the holding time".

In claim 6, line 10-11 "the holding time".

In claim 7, line 11-12 "the holding time".

In claim 9, line 10 "the holding time".

In claim 11, line 10 "the holding time".

Allowable Subject Matter

4. Claims 1, 5-7, 9, and 11 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, set forth in this Office action.

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Claims 2-3 will be allowed when claim 1 is rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, set forth in this Office action.

Claim 8 will be allowed when claim 7 is rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, set forth in this Office action.

Claim 10 will be allowed when claim 9 is rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, set forth in this Office action.

5. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

The combination of a change step for changing a held portion of the recording medium held by the holding member when the holding time in the holding step exceeds a predetermined time, recited in claim 1. This invention solves the problem of preventing or reducing contamination of a recording medium caused by a recording medium conveying unit, regardless of the type of recording medium. It is this combination, which is not taught or suggested in the prior art, which make the claims allowable over the prior art.

The combination of a cut-off step of cutting off a contaminated portion of the recording medium due to holding of the recording medium by the holding member when the holding time in the holding step reaches a predetermined time before performing an image formation, recited in claim 5. This invention solves the problem of preventing or reducing contamination of a recording medium caused by a recording medium conveying unit, regardless of the type of recording medium. It is this combination, which

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is not taught or suggested in the prior art, which make the claims allowable over the prior art.

The combination of a conveyance step for conveying a contaminated portion of the recording medium due to holding of the holding time in the holding step reaches a predetermined time as well as a non-contaminated portion continuous to the contaminated portion, so that image formation is performed on a portion after the conveyed portion, recited in claim 6. This invention solves the problem of preventing or reducing contamination of a recording medium caused by a recording medium conveying unit, regardless of the type of recording medium. It is this combination, which is not taught or suggested in the prior art, which make the claims allowable over the prior art.

The combination of a holding force change step of changing a holding force of the recording medium by the holding member, so as to change an intrusion amount of the holding member into the recording medium when the holding time in the holding step reaches a predetermined time, recited in claim 7. This invention solves the problem of preventing or reducing contamination of a recording medium caused by a recording medium conveying unit, regardless of the type of recording medium. It is this combination, which is not taught or suggested in the prior art, which make the claims allowable over the prior art.

The combination of a holding force release step for releasing holding of the recording medium by the holding member when the holding time in the holding step reaches a predetermined time, recited in claim 9. This invention solves the problem of

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preventing or reducing contamination of a recording medium caused by a recording medium conveying unit, regardless of the type of recording medium. It is this combination, which is not taught or suggested in the prior art, which make the claims allowable over the prior art.

The combination of a conveyance/holding step for conveying the recording medium and holding a non-image portion by the holding member when the holding time in the holding step reaches a predetermined time, recited in claim 11. This invention solves the problem of preventing or reducing contamination of a recording medium caused by a recording medium conveying unit, regardless of the type of recording medium. It is this combination, which is not taught or suggested in the prior art, which make the claims allowable over the prior art.

6. Claims 12-24 are allowed.

7. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

The combination of a control means for performing control in such a manner that a contact portion of the recording medium held by the holding member is maintained only for a predetermined time and is changed to another contact portion from time to time, recited in claim 12. This invention solves the problem of preventing or reducing contamination of a recording medium caused by a recording medium conveying unit, regardless of the type of recording medium. It is this combination, which is not taught or suggested in the prior art, which make the claims allowable over the prior art.

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Contact Information

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Juanita D. Stephens whose telephone number is (703) 308-1204. The examiner can normally be reached on Flex.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Stephen Meier can be reached on (703) 308-4896. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0956.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Juanita Stephens", written in a cursive style.

Patent Examiner
Juanita Stephens
2853
(703) 308-1204
August 22, 2003